

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /031 W  
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R 041210Z DEC 73  
FM USINT CAIRO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4532

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 CAIRO 3766

EXDIS

EO 11652: XGDS  
TAGS: PFOR  
SUBJECT: CALL ON SAYYED MAREI

1. SUMMARY: IN CALL ON SAYYED MAREI, PRESIDENTIAL ASSISTANT, HE EXPRESSED CONCERN USG CONSCIOUSLY FANNING ANTI-ARAB OPINION IN US BECAUSE OF OIL EMBARGO. CLAIMED SECRETARY'S STATEMENT ON COUNTERMEASURES IS A CASE IN POINT. CHARGED ISRAELI DELAYING TACTICS ARE BASED ON HOPE ANTI-ARAB SENTIMENT WILL REACH POINT WHERE CONFERENCE IS ABORTED. GOE IS LEADER OF ARAB AND AFRICAN WORLDS AND INTENDS REMAIN SO. USG SHOULD BE MINDFUL OF SADAT'S PUBLIC AND ARAB OPINION PROBLEM. IN SIGNING 6-POINT AGREEMENT, PRESIDENT STUCK HIS NECK OUT. DESPITE CRITICISMS, HE MANAGED GAIN ARAB SUMMIT GREEN LIGHT TO GO AHEAD ON NEGOTIATION PROCESS. FOR THIS TO CONTINUE HE NEEDS TANGIBLE EVIDENCE THAT HIS POLICY IS SUCCESSFUL. IF TALKS DRAG ON INCONCLUSIVELY YEAR OR MORE, HIS POSITION WILL ERODE. GOE CANNOT ALLOW THIS TO HAPPEN. I DENIED CHARGE USG SEEKING FAN ANTI-ARAB SENTIMENTS. SAID READING SECRETARY'S ANSWER TO A QUESTION SHOULD DISPEL SUCH IMPRESSION. SAME TIME HE SHOULD REALIZE OIL EMBARGO IS RESENTED IN US AND IF IT CONTINUES INDEFINITELY, PUBLIC PRESSURES FOR COUNTERMEASURES WILL INEVITABLY ARISE. USG ANXIOUS MOVE AHEAD ON PEACE CONFERENCE AND STILL AWAITING GOE'S FORMAL CONCURRENCE. WE BELIEVE SUCH CONFERENCE IS FORUM WHERE CONSTRUCTIVE USG INFLUENCE CAN BEST BE EXERCISED. END SUMMARY.

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2. PAID LONG "COURTESY CALL" ON PRESIDENTIAL ASSISTANT SAYYED MAREI DECEMBER 3. AFTER AMENITIES, HE SAID HE WANTED TO TALK "POLITICS" AND WOULD BE CANDID. HOW DID USG VIEW CURRENT SITUATION? I REVIEWED OUR RATIONALE

AND EFFORTS TO DATE TO MOVE AHEAD, POINTING OUT AMONG OTHER THINGS NEED TO GARNER PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT. GOOD PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE, BUT JOB MUST BE DONE CAREFULLY AND TAKES TIME. MAREI INTERRUPTED TO SAY HE AWARE OF THE SECRETARY'S RATIONALE, BUT DISMISSED PUBLIC/CONGRESSIONAL OPINION FACTOR AS SOMETHING EGYPT HAS HEARD TOO LONG AND CAN DO NOTHING ABOUT. THIS, HE CONTENDED, IS SOLELY A MATTER FOR THE ADMINISTRATION, ABOUT WHICH GOE CANNOT CONCERN ITSELF.

3. CONTINUING, HE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT USG SEEMED, IN HIS VIEW, TO BE CONSCIOUSLY ENCOURAGING AMERICAN PUBLIC SENTIMENT TO BLAME ARABS FOR CURRENT OIL EMBARGO. CONTENDING OIL EMBARGO PLAYS ONLY SMALL PART IN CURRENT SHORTAGES, HE ASSERTED THERE ARE OTHER MORE IMPORTANT FACTORS WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO IT. SPECIFICALLY, HE VIEWED THE SECRETARY'S RECENT PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT ABOUT POSSIBLE COUNTER-MEASURES AS A "THREAT" DESIGNED TO FAN ANTI-ARAB FEELINGS. INSTEAD, USG SHOULD OPENLY BRAND ISRAEL AS "AGGRESSOR" SO THAT THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WOULD KNOW WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CURRENT SHORTAGES.

4. ARABS, HE WENT ON, WANT ONLY TO RECOVER TERRITORIES OCCUPIED BY ISRAEL. EGYPT HAS SHATTERED THE MYTH OF ISRAEL'S INVULNERABILITY. SOME ISRAELI LEADERS APPEAR TO RECOGNIZE NEED FOR RETHINKING OF TRADITIONAL STRATEGIC DOCTRINES. ALLON, FOR EXAMPLE, HAD MADE A STATEMENT THE OTHER DAY WITH WHICH HE COULD THOROUGHLY AGREE. IN CONTRAST, DAYAN'S RECENT STATEMENTS SIMPLY HEIGHTEN TENSIONS. ISRAEL HAS BEEN STALLING IN KM. 101 TALKS. THERE ARE TWO REASONS FOR THIS: (A) UPCOMING ELECTION, WHICH HE THOUGHT WAS THE LESSER ELEMENT, AND (B) A DESIRE ON ITS PART TO DELAY PEACE TALKS AS LONG AS POSSIBLE SO THAT ANTI-ARAB SENTIMENT IN THE US AND EUROPE MAY RISE STILL MORE AND HOPEFULLY ABORT CONFERENCE ALTOGETHER. UNLESS ISRAEL SHOWS SOME SIGN OF EARLY  
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MOVEMENT ON CRUCIAL DISENGAGEMENT ISSUE, ANY PEACE CONFERENCE WILL HOPELESSLY BOG DOWN IN DISCUSSING OCTOBER 22 LINES AND SIMILAR MATTERS.

5. MAREI SAID USG HAS REPEATEDLY EMPHASIZED NEED TO AVOID ROCKING BOAT BEFORE ISRAELI ELECTIONS. AS A POLITICIAN, HE COULD APPRECIATE ISRAEL'S DOMESTIC PROBLEMS INVOLVED. BUT USG AND ISRAEL SHOULD ALSO APPRECIATE THAT SADAT HAS A PUBLIC OPINION PROBLEM. DESCRIBING SADAT AS A MODERATE, MAREI STATED THE PRESIDENT HAD BEEN CRITICIZED BY SOME ARAB LEADERS FOR SIGNING THE 6-POINT AGREEMENT. MAREI COULD PERSONALLY ATTEST TO THIS. IMMEDIATELY AFTER SIGNING HE HAD BEEN SENT TO VARIOUS ARAB CAPITALS TO EXPLAIN WHY SADAT HAD DONE SO.

HE HAD DONE SO IN TERMS OF SADAT'S CONFIDENCE IN SECRETARY'S GENUINE DESIRE TO MOVE TOWARD A JUST AND DURABLE PEACE. HOWEVER, FROM A PUBLIC AND ARAB OPINION VIEWPOINT, USG SHOULD REALIZE 6-POINT AGREEMENT HAS TO BE EQUITABLY IMPLEMENTED FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL, NOT JUST ISRAEL. IN ABSENCE OF EXPEDITIOUS MOVEMENT ON DIS-ENGAGEMENT CALLED FOR THEREIN, HE CONTENTED SADAT'S POSITION AT HOME AND ABROAD WILL INEVITABLY BE WEAKENED.

6. AT THIS POINT MAREI AFFIRMED IN FORCEFUL TERMS EGYPT'S FIRM DETERMINATION TO RETAIN LEADERSHIP IN THE ARAB AND AFRICAN WORLDS. THERE SHOULD BE NO QUESTION ABOUT THIS. BUT TO DO SO REQUIRES THAT SADAT'S POLICIES SHOW SIGNS OF TANGIBLE SUCCESS. AT THE RECENT SUMMIT, DESPITE SNIPING FROM SOME QUARTERS, SADAT HAD BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN A GREEN LIGHT. IF THIS IS TO CONTINUE, THERE MUST BE EXPEDITIOUS PROGRESS. PRESIDENT'S CURRENT POSITION IN ARAB-AFRICAN CIRCLES IS HIGH. IF PEACE TALKS DRAG ON INCONCLUSIVELY FOR A YEAR OR MORE, AS SOME PRESS ACCOUNTS HAVE SUGGESTED, SADAT'S POSITION IS BOUND TO ERODE. GOE CANNOT ALLOW THIS TO HAPPEN.

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FM USINT CAIRO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4533

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EXDIS

7. GOE IS ANXIOUS TO DIVERT SCARCE RESOURCES TO BADLY NEEDED DEVELOPMENT. HE, IN PARTICULAR, HAD LONG PUSHED NEW AGRICULTURAL SCHEMES. GOE UNABLE TO DO SO AS LONG AS ISRAELI "THREAT" LOOMS LARGE AND ISRAELIS OCCUPY ARAB LANDS. IT IS ISRAELI "EXPANSIONISM," HE INSISTED, WHICH MUST BE CURBED. ISRAEL SHOULD RECOGNIZE IT IS IN ITS OWN BEST INTERESTS TO LIVE IN PEACE IN THE AREA. HE HOPED USG IMPRESSES THIS UPON GOI.

8. TOLD MAREI I APPRECIATED HIS CANDOR AND I HOPED HE WOULD ALSO ALLOW ME TO BE FRANK. I APPRECIATED VIEWS HE HAD EXPRESSED AND RESPECTED THEM, BUT ALSO ASKED THAT HE UNDERSTAND OUR POSITION. FIRST, I HAD TO DIS-

AGREE WITH HIS SUGGESTION THAT AMERICAN PUBLIC/CONGRESSIONAL OPINION SHOULD BE BELITTLED. ON THE CONTRARY, IT IS VITAL PART OF THE POLITICAL EQUATION IN WHICH USG MUST OPERATE. AS SUCH, TO THE EXTENT THAT GOE HAS AN INTEREST IN CURRENT US EFFORTS TO MOVE AHEAD, IT SHOULD CONSIDER IMPORTANCE OF AVOIDING ANY ACTION WHICH WILL MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE ADMINISTRATION TO DO WHAT IT CONSIDERS NECESSARY. I HAD ALSO TO DIFFER WITH HIS SUGGESTION THAT USG MAY BE USING OIL EMBARGO TO FAN ANTI-ARAB SENTIMENT. THIS IS NOT SO. BUT HE SHOULD KNOW THAT CONSIDERABLE BODY OF AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION EXISTS, AS I COULD ATTEST FROM HAVING JUST COME FROM GRASS ROOTS PENNSYLVANIA, THAT BLAMES ARABS FOR CURRENT SHORTAGES. AS FOR BRANDING ANYONE AN AGGRESSOR, AS HE HAD SUGGESTED, USG HAS CONSTANTLY AVOIDED  
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DOING THAT IN THE BELIEF THAT IT CAN BEST FACILITATE PROGRESS TOWARD PEACE BY NOT PUBLICLY CASTING BLAME. I COULD TELL HIM, HOWEVER, THAT CIRCUMSTANCES OF RECENT HOSTILITIES WERE SUCH THAT I PERSONALLY KNEW MANY GRASS ROOTS AMERICANS WHO HOLD EGYPT RESPONSIBLE. (SOMEWHAT RUEFULLY, MAREI SAID HE SUPPOSED SO.)

9. AS FOR AN INTERPRETATION OF THE SECRETARY'S PRESS STATEMENT ABOUT POSSIBLE COUNTERMEASURES, I WONDERED IF HE HAD SEEN THE FULL TEXT OF THAT STATEMENT. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION, AND I THOUGHT HE SHOULD BE ESPECIALLY MINDFUL THAT AMERICANS ARE CURRENTLY ASKING SUCH QUESTIONS, THE SECRETARY HAD STRESSED WE ARE SEEKING TO MOVE THE DISPUTANTS TOWARD A SPIRIT OF GREATER RECONCILIATION. HE HAD EXPRESSED THE HOPE WHEN THIS IS FULLY APPRECIATED IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THERE MAY BE SOME GREATER UNDERSTANDING ON ARAB PART OF OUR SINCERITY. SECRETARY HAD ALSO INDICATED THAT IF PRESSURES CONTINUE UNREASONABLY AND INDEFINITELY, THEN COUNTERMEASURES WOULD HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED BUT THAT USG WOULD DO SO WITH ENORMOUS RELUCTANCE. USG HOPED MATTERS WOULD NOT REACH THIS POINT. THIS WAS HARDLY A THREAT. IT WAS A SIMPLE STATEMENT OF FACT. ARAB PRESS HAD, IN MY VIEW, REGRETTABLY DISTORTED STATEMENT. HOWEVER, HE SHOULD HAVE NO DOUBT THAT AMERICAN PUBLIC IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE EMBARGO, REGARDS IT AS UNREASONABLE AND FRANKLY RESENTS IT. IN MY VIEW, IF EMBARGO CONTINUES INDEFINITELY, IT IS SURE TO LOSE THE ARABS WHATEVER DEGREE OF WIDER PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING RECENT EVENTS MAY AGAIN HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT. SHOULD THIS HAPPEN, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR ADMINISTRATION TO PLAY THE CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE THAT IT ENVISAGES IN UPCOMING NEGOTIATING PROCESS. I, TOO, WAS NOT SAYING THIS WAS A THREAT, BUT AS A POLITICAL REALITY WHICH I WAS SURE HE, WHO HAD LONG BEEN A MEMBER OF THE PEOPLES ASSEMBLY AND ASU, WOULD UNDERSTAND. (HE NODDED

HIS HEAD.)

10. ALLUDING TO HIS COMMENT ABOUT ISRAELI TACTICS, I SUGGESTED THAT THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS ARE A COMPLEX FACTOR THAT MUST BE CONSIDERED. HE MIGHT CRITICIZE SOME MEMBERS OF PRESENT ISRAELI LEADERSHIP, BUT DID HE THINK  
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PROSPECTS OF A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WOULD BE MADE EASIER IF THERE IS A DRASTIC CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN ISRAEL? (HE QUICKLY SAID NO.) MOREOVER, WHILE I WOULD INDEED EXPECT SOME ISRAELI LEADERS TO HOPE FOR GROWING ANTI-ARAB SENTIMENT IN THE US AS THE OIL EMBARGO IS INCREASINGLY FELT, I REMINDED HIM THAT THIS IS A WEAPON THE ARABS WILL GRATUITOUSLY BE GIVING ISRAEL IF THE OIL EMBARGO IS NOT EASED.

11. USG, I ASSURED HIM, IS ALSO MINDFUL OF SADAT'S PUBLIC OPINION PROBLEM. IT RECOGNIZES EGYPT'S HIGH POSITION IN THE ARAB WORLD, AS ATTESTED BY THE SECRETARY'S COMING TO CAIRO FIRST. USG HAS NO DESIRE ERODE THE PRESIDENT'S POSITION WITH ARAB AND AFRICAN STATES. SAME TIME, IF USG IS TO PLAY THE CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE THAT EGYPT AND WE DESIRE, IT MUST BE GIVEN CHANCE TO DO SO IN THE MANNER THAT IT CONSIDERS MOST EFFECTIVE. THE SECRETARY IS VERY SERIOUS IN WANTING TO MOVE AHEAD. IN MANY WAYS, THE PRESENT MOMENT IS THE MOST PROPITIOUS TIME TO SEEK TO DO SO. BUT THERE MUST BE RAPID MOVEMENT FORWARD ON THE BROADER ISSUES. A PEACE CONFERENCE SHOULD GET UNDER WAY WITHOUT DELAY. WE ARE STILL AWAITING GOE SIGNAL TO PROCEED. WE ARE CONVINCED THAT OUR INFLUENCE CAN BEST BE USED IN THE CONTEXT OF A PEACE CONFERENCE, NOT MILITARY TALKS.

12. MAREI LISTENED ATTENTIVELY. AS A POLITICIAN, HE SAID HE COULD UNDERSTAND THESE POINTS. SAME TIME, HE WAS NOT SURE THAT THERE WAS ENOUGH REGARD FOR NEED TO KEEP SADAT'S POSITION HIGH. EARLY PROGRESS IN MILITARY DISENGAGEMENT TALKS WOULD BE A MAJOR STEP IN THIS DIRECTION.

13. COMMENT: OUR TALK WAS FRANK AND CANDID THROUGHOUT. HE, LIKE SO MANY OTHER EGYPTIAN LEADERS THESE PAST FEW WEEKS, SOUGHT TO DRIVE HOME THAT SADAT HAS A PUBLIC AND ARAB OPINION PROBLEM WHICH HE MUST SATISFY. WHILE MAREI DISCLAIMS BEING ANYTHING BUT A "FARMER," HE IS A SHREWD AND WELL INFORMED MAN. HIS POSITION WITH SADAT HAS SEEMINGLY STRENGTHENED IN PAST SIX MONTHS, AND PRESIDENT HAS USED HIM HEAVILY FOR INTER-ARAB RELATIONS. HE HAD  
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ISRAELI STATEMENTS AT HIS FINGERTIPS. I DID NOT HAVE  
IMPRESSION THAT HE IS PRIVY TO DETAILS OF RECENT EX-  
CHANGES AND THEREFORE CONFINED COMMENTS TO GENERALITIES.  
SINCE HE OBVIOUSLY HAS INFLUENCE ON THE PRESIDENT, I  
INTEND TO KEEP IN PERIODIC TOUCH WITH HIM.  
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## Message Attributes

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